

A  
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

SONS of the CLERGY,

IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. *PAUL*,

On *THURSDAY*, APRIL 17, 1755.

---

By *SAMUEL SALTER*, D.D. *K.*

PREACHER at the CHARTER-HOUSE, LONDON;  
PREBENDARY of NORWICH: and CHAPLAIN to  
the Right Honourable PHILIP, Earl of HARDWICKE,  
Lord High Chancellor of GREAT-BRITAIN.

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TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A LIST of the Annual Amount of the Collection for  
this CHARITY, from the Year 1721.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WHISTON, and B. WHITE, at  
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THE  
CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAVUL  
OF LONDON

BY THE REV. F. R. D.D.  
CHURCHMAN OF LONDON

A LIST OF THE ANNUAL AMOUNTS OF THE COLLECTION FOR  
THE YEAR 1871

AND OF THE DONATIONS  
MADE TO THE CHURCH



T O

*The Hon. and Rev. Mr. FREDERICK KEPPEL,*  
*The Rev. Mr. Archdeacon SMALLBROKE,*  
*The Rev. Mr. THOMAS ASHTON,*  
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S T E W A R D S

For the late FEAST of the

S O N S of the C L E R G Y,

T H I S

S E R M O N,

Preached and Published at their REQUEST,

Is INSCRIBED,

By Their most humble Servant,

SAMUEL SALTER.

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The Rev. Mr. THOMAS ANTON,

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# STEWARDS

For the late FEAST of the

SONS of the CLERGY,

THIS

# SERMON

Preaded and Published at the

is INSCRIBED,

By the most humble servant,

SAMUEL SALTER.



**A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE SONS  
OF THE CLERGY.\***

**EZEKIEL xxxvii. 3.**

*And He said unto Me; Son of Man, can these  
Bones live? And I answered; O LORD  
GOD, Thou knowest.*

**T**H E ancient Prophets; whom we believe,  
on the justest grounds and fullest evidence,  
to have been holy men of GOD; who  
spake no otherwise, for substance, than as  
they were moved by the holy Ghost: are wont not un-  
frequently to represent themselves, as led by the spirit  
of GOD which was in them, sometimes as enjoined  
by that spirit, to do certain acts; so different from our  
customs, and (I had almost said) so abhorrent from our  
notions

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\* SOME alterations have been made in this discourse, since it was  
preached; which a more leisurely review of the argument suggested to  
the Author.



notions of propriety and decorum, which are founded on those customs: that we find it difficult to reconcile such acts with our conceptions of the most high GOD; and know not how to suppose them, according to the letter, either suggested by Wisdom, or commanded by Goodness; which we acknowledge to be supreme.

YET doth not this circumstance at all choque the Faith, or revolt the Understanding, of the sober interpreter of Scripture; who considereth all such passages as strong figures of speech, and bold flights of oriental eloquence; by which is merely signified to us either the night vision, or the waking imagination of the day: each sent and impressed by GOD, for very obvious reasons; as tending to carry-on the great and truly divine plan, of inspiring and encouraging Virtue; of deterring from Vice and Disobedience. He therefore often conceiveth the only reality to lie in the application or moral, which is always proper and judicious; full of seasonable comfort, to the virtuous in affliction; to whom a speedy and sure restoration to peace and joy is promised: full of salutary warning to the wicked, in the high pride of seemingly secure enjoyment; to whom a no less certain fall is threatened: both under wise limitations and conditions.

SOMETHING not very unlike this may be said, concerning the vision of *dry bones*; which the prophet EZEKIEL saw or imagined: and the application, which follows in the context, permits us not to doubt of it's being well understood at the time; as aptly and elegantly describing the wretched and fallen state of the *Israelites*, then in captivity; and graciously assuring them of some future event, that should be very favourable to them;  
notwithstanding



notwithstanding their present forlorn to appearance and hopeless situation.

Whether by this event was prefigured merely that ; which was likely to be uppermost in their minds, and to engage their warmest and most immediate wishes and prayers ; viz. their return from captivity into their own land : or whether the spirit of prophesy carried its view, beyond the present people and the fortune of them, to far distant ages and generations yet unborn ; giving notice so long before-hand of the greater and more glorious restoration of GOD's own peculiar people, before the second coming of the blessed JESUS : or farther still, to give some idea of the general resurrection from the dead of the whole race of mankind : I leave to be discussed by persons of more leisure, and greater learning ; whose excellently useful labours are justly entitled to all the praise we can bestow upon them : while, by inquiring into every probable, and almost every possible, sense of the ancient prophecies, they enlarge their own minds, and those of all who study them, to the highest and most worthy conceptions of the great GOD ; “ who ruleth over all” ; and “ in whose hands are the issues of life and death, of good and evil” ; and lead us, in the natural course of this pious contemplation, to the most thankful acknowledgment of the infinite power and justice and wisdom of GOD ; whose present completion of what “ he hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began,” we behold with reverence and delight ; though partial and imperfect, (if I may so speak) in comparison of what we expect : and whose fuller and final accomplishment of



whatever he hath declared, we look-for with humble confidence; at his own due and appointed time: well knowing, "GOD is not a Man; that he should lie: or  
 "the Son of Man; that he should repent: hath he said;  
 "and shall he not do it? Or, hath he spoken; and shall  
 "he not make it good?"

For myself; I shall enter no farther into this context, or the vision recited and explained in it; than may barely suffice to shew, with what pathetic exactness this parable exhibits to us the sad case of those disconsolate widows and shiftless orphans; whom it is our buis'ness and earnest desire to recommend effectually to your charitable and kind notice: as also to point-out, with all possible brevity, and all imaginable deference, the best means of relieving their bitter anguish and distress; with reasonable hopes of the favourable acceptance and gracious co-operation of Him; who "putteth-down one,  
 "and setteth-up another".

How just and fair a claim these particular objects have, on your most cheerful and bountiful liberality; is a point, on which I shall forbear to enlarge: as it is, I suppose, the most usual and almost constant argument of the discourses on this anniversary; and hath therefore been often and well laid before you: and was so, with extraordinary clearness and energy, at your *last* annual assembly.

NOR do I wish to wound the tender and compassionate ear, unnecessarily or wantonly; with too minute and circumstantial a detail of the various articles, in which the resemblance I speak-of is unhappily manifest: We need only consider the general conduct of the Clergy  
 in



in life, the general expectations from them of the world about them, which they find or fancy themselves obliged in some sort to comply with; and the peculiar tenure, by which they are known to hold what little they have: to see, that it cannot well be otherwise.

FOR a right notion of the general conduct of Clergymen in life, I would beg leave to refer you to the fair and candid observer; not to the low, vehement, and common-place railer. I know, there hath prevailed, and still prevaieth among some, a strange affectation; of scarce ever mentioning the Clergy: but in expressions of the utmost scorn and contempt. Now, to say nothing of the outrageous *malignity*, of representing a whole profession indiscriminately in any odious and degrading light; or the monstrous *folly*, of making any persons' *birth* and *extraction* any part of their *character*; both which, however disagreeable to hear, are unworthy of a serious reply: though the latter would admit a very easy one; by appealing only to the common sense of mankind, at *any* time; to what every man must know, at *this* time: that *some* of the Clergy are of great and noble families; *many*, of such as are very reputable; *most*, of decent ones: but, to say nothing of these very gross calumnies; which have yet been very freely and familiarly thrown at us--- I am persuaded; every ingenuous man has had experience enough to know, and will have candor enough to own; that, whatever other defects there may be in their *education*, itself not unfrequently made a subject of reproach to them; however unfit it may (by accident, but surely not of necessity) have rendered them to appear with advantage, in the greater and higher, the more public



public active and shining scenes of life; yet it certainly sends them abroad into the world with a spirit and temper far above the low groveling and sordid notions, which form the *selfish* and the *servile* characters; so commonly imputed to Clergymen: far above the illiberal plans of living, so frequent every-where; even among men, greatly superior in substance and fortune.

Look into the House of a Clergyman in the country; you will find it as far removed, by *choice*, from the offensive and disgusting squalor of a cottage; as, by *necessity*, from the luxurious and pompous splendor of a palace: Look into his House-keeping and Management; you will *ordinarily* find a careful Frugality, happily united with a decent Hospitality; equally distant from the prodigal waste of the thoughtless Unthrif, and the mean parsimony of the carking Miser. Inquire into his Behaviour towards Others; are other men, of his rank and income, *more* ready and forward; are they half *so* ready and forward; to succour the distressed, to encourage the ingenious, to employ the industrious, to relieve the necessitous, to entertain the stranger! Instances without number might be given, in proof of all I have here advanced; were there not in reality some danger, in producing them, of hurting the very cause I wish to serve: of bringing into question the goodness of their *judgement*; the goodness of whose *intention* I am applauding. For, when we consider the unreasonableness of general expectation; and the petulant language, in which it is usually and familiarly expressed; we may justly arraign *their* prudence, who shew too respectful a regard to  
such



such extravagant demands; too little attention to their own circumstances and families.

THE customary stile, which *many* use in public on these occasions, is; "Freely ye have received; freely give"; and consequently makes it the indispensable duty of a Clergyman, to supply all *wants* of all *men*; to set his hand to remove the very heaviest burthens, which no one else careth to touch with a single finger: while in private they sneer-at him, for doing *so much*; whom they rail-at in company, for doing *no more*. Is any distress felt in the country; from unkindly seasons, a dear year, distempered cattle, or the like? the Clergyman *must* abate of his dues; and it is a great *Shame*, if he does not: the Landlord *may*, if he pleaseth; and it is a great *Favour*, if he does: Is any mechanical genius, travelling the land, in quest of encouragement? any sturdy begger, infesting it, out of idleness? any poor scholar, vainly seeking to recommend his attainments to an inattentive and deaf world? the Minister of the Parish is ever the *first* called-upon; often the only one called-upon, with any success: and the last especially thinks and pronounces it *very hard*; if he finds not entertainment for himself, as well as a subscription to his work; however undeserving each may in reality be.

BUT, not to argue from such extravagances; as an idle and thoughtless world is apt to build the most confident expectations upon: surely, when we reflect only on the immediate and pressing occasion most Clergymen and their families have, for much the greatest part of what their slender income produces; how certainly  
it.



it all goes from the family, when the Master *dies*; how incapable ordinarily it is of any kind of improvement, even by the best and most notable management, while he *lives*; how many opportunities are eagerly sought, and easily discovered, of lessening and impairing it; or adding to the trouble, charge, and odium of collecting it; and that too often by those, to whom he hath carefully “sown spiritual things;” to whom it should not therefore “seem a great thing, though he did “reap in peace and at ease their carnal things”: when we reflect, how incumbent it is on *Us*, above all men, if it is possible, so to contrive; as to save something, for those we shall leave behind us; since *Our* whole fortune, and all the instruments of it, depart with ourselves: whereas the Tradesman can bequeath his shop and credit; the Handicraftsman, his tools and stuff; the Gra- zier, his live stock and fleeces; the Fanner, his barns’ and yards’ contents; and every other man, but the mere Day-Labourer, something; to those, for whom he is bound to provide: when all these things, I say, are due- ly reflected on, it will not, it can not need any enlarge- ment, to convince you; that, while They are thus inces- santly called-upon; by their own personal occasions, by the cries of their children, by the liberal spirit of their education, by the religious principle of charity and be- nevolence, by the illiberal and irrational demands of an unfeeling world, which they are wont much too often to reverence beyond what they can either justify or af- ford; their miserable Families, when at last deprived of the whole poor support they had from them, are very properly compared to dead and very dry Bones; from



from which all hope of living again is at one sad blow cut-off.

LET us therefore turn-away, from this unpleasing view, to that speculation which naturally follows it; *viz.* by what means we may best restore life and breath, vigor and energy, to these fair but sapless bones.

AND here, may I be permitted to say? there seemeth to have been, in some respects, almost as great want of prudent and discrete conduct; as there is undoubtedly of modesty and justice, in the expectations of the world just now mentioned.

THAT this should be the lot of any particular Charities, we shall the less wonder; when we find the nature of Charity in general, though so clearly defined in scripture; and the encouragements to the attainment of it, though so distinctly laid-down there; yet so very strangely mis-understood by *many*, so very grossly mis-represented by *some*: merely, as it should seem, to serve a present purpose of both; though at the certain expense of Truth, of Reason, and of Religion.

THAT Alms-giving, when conducted by prudence, is a very commendable branch of Christian charity; can never be denied or disputed by any serious person, who looketh at all around him; who thinketh on his own connection with the rest of mankind; and readeth the scriptures of GOD with any care and attention: that it is the whole of it, according to the vulgar but abused sense of the word; can never be admitted by any, who readeth and considereth the strong case put and determined

doctw



mined by St. Paul ; that a man may give *all* his goods, to feed the poor ; and yet be wholly destitute of Gospel-charity.

As to the particular methods, by which Alms have been employed amongst us ; with an immediate view to the putting life into these dry bones : they have been very many and various ; and we desire to be understood, as very greatly obliged by them all. Let it not therefore be deemed arrogant, if we presume to surmise ; that there may yet be some “ spots, in our feast of charity ” ; some defects yet, in our “ labor of love ” : if we presume to suppose ; that at a time when useful and beneficial charity seems better understood, and for that reason carried higher and more closely followed-up, than was ever known ; the recommendation of any plan, for exalting our truly Christian intentions to the highest possible point of excellence and perfection ; will be taken kindly, and hear'd favorably.

THERE are some few counties in *England* ; which have set-up within themselves private societies, for the providing a maintenance and support for the widows and orphans of their respective Clergy : whereas the Corporation, established in this great City, extendeth alike and indiscriminately to all parts. It is not improbable ; that schemes may have been proposed, for introducing the like into other counties ; with reasonable hopes of like success : if such attempts have been made, and have failed ; this may have arisen, from the obscurity of the proposer ; from the ill-timedness, or other impropriety, of the proposal ; or from some other cause, which



which unless we certainly knew to be blame-worthy, we ought certainly not to pronounce such. Some schemes have been communicated to the public; for extending these benefactions, now confined to a few places and persons, as far and wide; as objects of them are to be found---But *all*, that I have seen, appear to have one common defect; in that they are raised on the uncertain basis of voluntary contribution: which, even where it is the most ample and generous, must still be allowed liable to be affected and shaken by caprice.

It is not perhaps commonly known; but may seem proper to be mentioned here and now, to the honor of the parties most immediately concerned; and for the information of others: that the noble collections, annually made at this solemnity, are yet attended with so great charge and trouble to the Stewards of the year; that it would be very difficult to provide ourselves with a succession of them: were there not many excellent persons, to whom we must acknowledge our-selves exceedingly indebted; who, from a tender remembrance of the relation they bear to our order, and a more than ordinary portion of that spirit, which aimeth to serve the necessitous in it; are contented to accept a very burthensom and expensive office, for the sake of doing a very great and real kindness. The consideration of this extraordinary circumstance should methinks produce an other effect, on all that hear of it, beside merely raising their admiration; --- should excite such, as receive a *double* pleasure on this day, to exert a double liberality; in return for what they receive: and to study every practi-



cable method of easing the burthen, and lessening the expense, both chearfully undergone with a view to oblige them.

I MEAN not, by what I have now hinted, to distinguish invidiously; between the delight, which every person of *worth* receiveth, from a consciousness of the good he is doing on this occasion; and that, which every person of *taste* receiveth, from the exquisite musical performances here exhibited; nor to call the one a *rational*, the other a *sensual* delight: for, not to dwell on the former; about which no one can have any doubt---as the Music, employed on these days, is perfectly agreeable to what our Church thinks it becoming to call to the aid of her most solemn devotions; perfectly agreeable to the practise of the most ancient times; and in some sort formed on the plan, which GOD himself instituted for his own people; I may justly call the pleasure received from hence also, *rational*: such it certainly must be in all those, who find and feel their devotion raised and exalted by it; and their hearts innocently warmed to the actual exercise of the truest kindness and beneficence.

I HAVE called it, very freely, but I hope not immodestly, a defect in *all* the schemes I have seen; that they are founded on voluntary contribution: yet I am sensible, very many and great difficulties must attend *any* scheme, which seeks to build on a greater certainty. And even an obscure man, one placed out of the world, as it were, may yet see---there are so many different, and those sometimes clashing and jarring, interests; which



which *are* concerned, and *are to be* reconciled, in a matter of this sort: so many different persons, to be consulted, satisfied, and pleased; as well as so many to be served: that, it must be owned; however desirable the event may be, and certainly is; yet to frame and conduct and perfect such a scheme, to bring it to a due ripeness and a happy issue; will require much thought and care and prudence: for a crude and undigested or ill-digested proposal, offered to the world at large, much more to the supreme authority; might hurt and defeat, instead of forwarding, so important a public measure.

BUT let not any difficulties so discourage us, as to make us despair of success; let them rather excite us all to a strenuous exertion of our best powers: in full hopes, that wise consideration and consultation will surmount all obstacles—for when a plan of this sort is laid before the Clergy, to whose deliberate judgment upon it the tenderest regard will doubtless be had; the general readiness among them now to subscribe, where any subscription has been set on foot, leaves no room to doubt; but they will as gladly and unanimously consent, as those of our neighbour nation have already done, to a small annual contribution in present; for the future benefit of their wives and children: after which, should the Fathers of our Church employ their just credit and influence, together with their consummate experience and accurate knowledge of the occasions and necessities of their reverend brethren, in fartherance of such a proposal: which no one, who is at all acquainted with their characters, can possibly question.---Should the several Patrons.



Patrons of Benefices and Dignities ecclesiastical agree to encourage it, by their kind and cheerful compliance --- Should an application, in consequence of this, be made humbly to Parliament; for an Act to fix and settle this, in perpetuity: and should the Legislature so far attend to the application, as to direct a Bill to be prepared to this end: which perhaps we might on good grounds promise our-selves ---- and should our good and gracious King, whose generous heart is ever affectionate to all his subjects; and whose whole reign hath been one continued proof of his regard to our constitution, in Church and State; of his favor to the Clergy, and reverence for their holy function; give the royal concurrence to such a Law: which methinks we owe it to Him, and to the many gracious proofs we have received of his protection, to wish and labor for the full digesting and perfecting of, in His time; and while the undeserved goodness of Providence yet spares us His invaluable life---I say, should all these things come-out, as we have good reason to trust they will; we might justly felicitate our selves on the full possession of our most ardent and reasonable wishes and desires, in this very important respect.

BUT it is enough for Me, to have hinted these things; which I would be understood to do with the utmost deference to wiser, abler, and more considerable persons: and it becomes me not to procede any farther now; unless perhaps to remove out of the way one obvious objection: viz. that hereby we shall at once shut the door against the free and generous donations of the benevolent



volent and charitable, either in or out of our own body: the very reverse of which seems more likely to follow; in *my* opinion---For, as no such established scheme would alter the nature of Charity, or of any branch of it, or of the obligations to it; so, I presume, not a few, who may now decline to assist us; because, as they think and say, we do not sufficiently assist ourselves; when they saw us hearty and unanimous, in taking so great a part of the burthen (if I may call the maintenance of our families a burthen,) on our own shoulders; would the more readily and cordially join with us, and lend us their helping hand.

AND if private liberalities *were* by this means confined to particular persons and places, well known to the cheerful giver; instead of being thrown all together into the common stock, and distributed among the numberless claimants and petitioners; without any other choice or preference, than the immediate necessities or particular merits of any object suggest; which must be the case, where strict honor and integrity forbid all *partial* regards whatsoever: it will be so much the better---and *They* will have so much the greater satisfaction in their bounty; who have the very best right to all it can afford them.

THERE is yet one consideration more; and that a very material one: for which I shall return, as I ought, to the Prophet and his Vision.----Whatever scheme is now, or shall be hereafter, set on foot; for the relief of this very numerous, very deserving, yet very distressed part of our fellow-creatures; must, after all, be imperfect;



imperfect; how disinterested and how wise soever: the very best and utmost mere man can do, is to "cause the  
 " sinews and the flesh to come-up upon these dry bones,  
 " and the skin to cover them above;" (V. 8.) or perhaps, to procede a little farther yet; and set them "up  
 " on their feet:" but to make them any thing better than inanimate statues, bearing only the exterior semblance of human creatures; to enable them to walk-about with spirit and life, and follow the proper employments and functions of Men with activity and cheerfulness; "the  
 " breath of GOD," excited by the devout prayers and discrete endeavors of the faithful, must "come from the  
 " four winds, and breathe upon these slain; that they  
 " may live, and become an exceding great army:" (V. 9, 10.) that the English Clergy, in themselves the glory and just pride of the Reformation, as is universally said and allowed; may not, in their nearest and dearest relations, become "a scorn and a disgrace and a  
 " hissing to all nations of the earth:" that those venerable but drooping Matrons, whom we wish to support in ease and comfort, though much short of what attended their former affluence; those smiling Infants, whose tender years we desire may not be imbittered with unnecessary anguish; may be secure of enjoying their pittance, whatsoever it be, with as much satisfaction as we can procure to them: and may early learn to adore the wisdom of that Providence; which, in bereaving them of *one* Parent, perhaps of *both*, hath not left them without Hope, because not "without GOD, in the  
 " world;" but hath taught them to recognize, in every  
 worthy



worthy and good man, a Parent, a Benefactor and a Friend; the highly favor'd substitute on Earth of their almighty Father, who is in Heaven: to whom our most earnest prayers should be continually and fervently poured-forth, for his Blessing on this or any other scheme; calculated to promote his glory, and the good of our fellow-creatures, under the heavy stroke of his afflicting hand.

F I N I S.



worthy and good man, a Parent, a Benefactor and a  
Friend; the highly respectable on Earth of their  
amazing Father, who, to whom of most  
earnest prayers should be made, and fervently por-  
ed forth, for his Blessings on this or any other Father;  
calculated to promote his glory, and the good of our  
fellow-creatures; under the heavy yoke of his affliction  
hand.





*A LIST of the Annual Amount of this Charity, as complete as could be procured, commencing with 1721. By which will be perceived, how much in general the Charity has encreased from the Approbation and Bounty of the Public, and which, it is hoped, it will continue to do so, as to equal the Wants of those whom it was calculated to provide for.*

|         | <i>l.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |         | <i>l.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1721--- | 330       | 16        |           | 1739--- | 912       | 11        | 3         |
| 1722--- | 382       | 16        |           | 1740--- | 784       | 1         | 6         |
| 1723--- | 382       | 6         |           | 1741--- | 834       | 2         |           |
| 1724--- | 566       | 10        |           | 1742--- | 866       | 6         | 2         |
| 1725--- | 630       | 5         |           | 1743--- | 819       |           |           |
| 1726--- | 575       | 4         |           | 1744--- | 848       | 16        | 9         |
| 1727--- | 651       |           |           | 1745--- | 1044      |           |           |
| 1728--- | 595       | 17        | 9         | 1746--- | 922       | 10        | 6         |
| 1729--- | 523       | 6         | 11        | 1747--- | 1062      | 2         |           |
| 1730--- | 722       | 6         | 4         | 1748--- | 916       | 6         | 6         |
| 1731--- | 840       | 1         |           | 1749--- | 985       | 12        | 6         |
| 1732--- | 951       | 1         | 3         | 1750--- | 1134      | 14        |           |
| 1733--- | 909       | 6         |           | 1751--- | 1167      | 19        |           |
| 1734--- | 1000      | 3         |           | 1752--- | 1101      | 18        | 6         |
| 1735--- | 850       | 5         | 3         | 1753--- | 1063      | 2         | 6         |
| 1736--- | 837       | 7         |           | 1754--- | 976       | 8         | 2         |
| 1737--- | 856       | 9         | 7         | 1755--- | 1087      | 15        | 6         |
| 1738--- | 935       | 2         | 7         |         |           |           |           |



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